

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 EB-11 COME-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

RSC-01 FAA-00 CAB-09 RSR-01 /053 W

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R 131900Z JUL 73

FM AMCONSUL BELIZE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3036

AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

U S POSTAL SERVICE WASHDC

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: ETEL PFOR BH GT

SUBJECT: INTERNATIONAL MAIL SERVICE TO BELIZE

REFERENCE: BELIZE 352

1. THE BELIZE CITY POSTMASTER CALLED ON CONGEN TODAY CONCERNING DELAYS IN INTERNATIONAL AIR MAIL, WHICH, HE STATES, HAVE BEEN THE CAUSE OF NUMEROUS RECENT COMPLAINTS ON THE PART OF GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND THE PUBLIC IN GENERAL. HE SAID, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT 82 MAIL POUCHES DESPATCHED FROM MIAMI ON JUNE 28, 29, 30 AND JULY 1, 3, 4, VIA PANAM THROUGH GUATEMALA ALL ARRIVED ON JULY 5, RATHER THAN IN AN ORDERLY FASHION, CAUSING A CONSIDERABLE PROBLEM FOR THE POST OFFICE. MAIL DESPATCHED DIRECTLY FROM MIAMI ON JULY 2 ARRIVED THE SAME DAY. HE ALSO STATED THAT MAIL POUCHES SEEMED TO BE "LOST" WHEN THEY GO THROUGH GUATEMALA AND SOMETIMES DO NOT SHOW UP FOR A WEEK OR TWO. AS WITH OTHER BELIZEANS, HE FEELS THAT THE GUATEMALANS HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE SITUATION, ALTHOUGH HE SAID HE ONLY RECALLED ONE POUCH BEING "OPENED BY MISTAKE" IN GUATEMALA.

2. POSTMASTER SAID THAT IN ACCORDANCE WITH LONG-STANDING INSTRUCTIONS, LETTERS RECEIVED FROM GUATEMALA WITH STAMPS

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ON THE "BELICE ES NUESTRO" THEME ARE RETURNED TO SENDER--

INCLUDING THOSE ADDRESSED TO THE AMERICAN CONSULATE, AND THOSE APPARENTLY FROM U.S. GOVERNMENT AGENCIES.

3. THE POSTMASTER THOUGHT THAT THE IMMEDIATE SOLUTION TO IMPROVING THE MAIL SITUATION WAS TO HAVE ALL MAIL FROM MIAMI HELD AND DESPATCHED ON DIRECT FLIGHTS VIA TACA OR TAN, AS IS NOW THE CASE THREE DAYS PER WEEK, WHEN PANAM DOES NOT TAKE THE MAIL TO GUATEMALA. HE IS TO SUPPLY FACTUAL DATA REGARDING MAIL DELIVERIES, WHICH WILL BE FORWARDED BY POUCH.

4. COMMENT: THERE IS OBVIOUSLY A GROWING EXASPERATION ABOUT SLOW MAIL DELIVERIES WITH GUATEMALA AND/OR PANAM RIGHTLY OR WRONGLY SHARING THE BLAME. MAIL SENT DIRECTLY FROM MIAMI RECEIVED THE SAME DAY IN BELIZE WOULD SEEM MORE LOGICAL THAN HAVING IT ROUTED THROUGH GUATEMALA WHERE THE ADDITIONAL HANDLING REQUIRED GIVES ANOTHER CHANCE FOR SLIPPAGE. IT WOULD ALSO ELIMINATE THE BELIZEAN SUSPICION THAT THE GUATEMALANS ARE AT BEST NEGLIGENT ABOUT BELIZE'S MAIL IF NOT ENGAGED IN SOME MINOR FORM OF HARASSMENT. WOLLAM

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